

Plymouth

FEBRUARY 11-13, 2022



40th ANNUAL ICE FESTIVAL

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40th ANNUAL *Plymouth* ICE FESTIVAL FEBRUARY 11-13, 2022

Back to basics 40th Annual Ice Festival celebrates small town charm

While the 40th annual Plymouth Ice Festival has moved forward on the calendar this year, the event has also taken a step back in history.

Set for Feb. 11, 12 and 13 this year rather than the traditional mid-January celebration of all things winter, the event is going “back to basics” according to producer James Gietzen of JAG Entertainment. Gietzen said a number of factors prompted the schedule move, the most important being the weather and the current COVID pandemic. In his decade of producing the festival, he said he has seen years with temperatures too cold for crowds and years it was too warm for the ice carvings which prompted consideration of the move to February. The move may allow more time for the COVID omicron epidemic to ease, something Gietzen and his crew are hoping happens.

“I guess you could say, we are going back to basics,” Gietzen said. “Last year, because of COVID, we spread the ice carvings out throughout the downtown,” he said, “and people seemed to really enjoy that. The merchants in town, too, were happy with the



response from the crowds. The festival really made a positive impact on the entire community last year at a time when people needed a break.

“We got so much positive feedback from everyone involved last year,” he added. Gietzen said the original festival was conceived 40 years ago as a way to attract residents to downtown Plymouth and help businesses during a slow time of year following the holi-

days. He said the festival accomplished that last year while providing a “really fun way for families to get out and enjoy the outdoors and feel safe.”

Gietzen said that positive response from both merchants and crowds last year was a real inducement to move the event to February this year. Using the entire downtown area leaving

See **Basics**, page 4

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Basics from page 3

space between the outdoor sculptures will provide an added level of safety for visitors.

“People need to get out. We’ve all sort of been locked up for so long,” Gietzen said. “This is safe, it’s outdoors and it’s fun for the whole family. I think it’s people’s nature to want to get outside and this festival gives people a chance to remember all the good things about being outside and the good things still going on in the community despite the virus.”

He added that the festival would be safe, no matter what the COVID levels might be because it was outdoors and people could determine their own level of contact. “We suggest wearing a

mask, too, depending on the numbers, but people will have that choice since we are outside on the public sidewalks and the sculptures are distanced.”

There will be a few larger ice sculptures in Kellogg Park as usual, but even those will be further apart to ensure safety. Those won’t be the huge carvings the festival has sometimes featured. This year, Gietzen said, the professional carvers will be concentrating on smaller, more unique and intricate sculptures throughout town. Those will be displayed in front of businesses and attractions throughout downtown. Gietzen said he estimates a total of 80 to 100 sculptures.

The Gathering will again host the Hot Spot where visitors can warm up and enjoy the festival food from the



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vending trucks which will be on site along with several local vendors. The Petting Farm for children will be back this year along with several family attractions.

"Last year, during the pandemic, so many people came out and the businesses got the shot in the arm they really need at this time of year. I think this festival makes a positive impact on the community at a time they really need it," Gietzen said.

The proximity to Valentine's Day and the "big" football game aren't lost on Gietzen, either. "It's perfect for couples to come to the festival and see the ice before they celebrate the holiday," he said. "And families can visit the festival before they go to watch the game on Sunday."



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Growth spurt

Service agency marks 50 years of service throughout area

They've had a little work done.

This year, as admirers enjoy the ice sculptures throughout downtown Plymouth, the new façade at a 50-year-old business will nearly outshine the artistic carving on display in front of the building.

Growth Works, on Main Street, has been serving both the Plymouth community and the entire area for more than half a century. The organization began in 1971 as Plymouth Youth Incorporated, a youth drop-in center serving the community. The organization offered hope, resources and was

*We are glad
we can showcase
our new building
in time for
annual Ice Fest.*

a safe haven for many struggling students and teens.

As time passed and the needs of

the community evolved, the organization grew into a vital resource to meet the needs of the community which now includes nearly 100 staff members in four locations in Plymouth, Canton Township, Garden City and a Partnership in Oxford.

Growth Works offers substance use treatment for both youth and adults and case management services for youth in the juvenile justice system. The organization also provides supervised visitation and family services and partners with other local organizations for back-to-school drives, men-



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toring and counseling in local schools. Growth Works participates with a number of the local Chamber of Commerce organizations, providing education and resources.

"This construction allowed us to add space for our growing staff as well as update the appearance in accordance with the improvements other businesses in downtown Plymouth. We are glad we can showcase our new building in time for annual Ice Fest," explained Operations Director Brian Langlois.

Anne Munro, Growth Works business director said the remodeling has proven a benefit to the organization and the community.

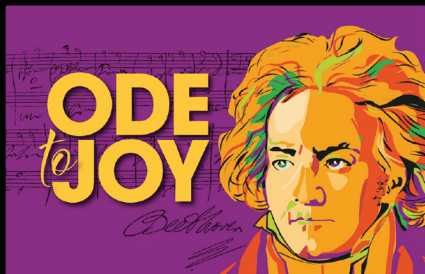
See **Growth**, page 8



When exterior construction at Growth Works Plymouth headquarters was nearly complete, the organization hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the progress as well as 50 years of serving the community.



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Growth from page 7

"The renovations have provided us with the opportunity to expand our services and better serve the needs of the community. We look forward to our continued growth and finding new ways to serve Plymouth and the surrounding communities," Munro said.

Recently, in response to a growing need, Growth Works has expanded to provide mental health resources and support. The organization now has a dedicated suicide prevention coordinator who is working with school districts throughout western Wayne County in an effort to reach a goal of zero youth suicides. For every client, youth and adult, Growth Works staff provide trauma informed care and all



staff members have been trained in this approach.

"We recognize that our clients are dealing with struggles and challenges situations, no matter what services they may be receiving," noted Growth Works CEO Nick Griswold.

"It has been an honor and a privi-

lege to serve the Plymouth community for over 50 years. It is our partnerships with police departments, local elected officials and other organizations across the Conference of Western Wayne (CWW) that made it possible for us to serve the community," he said.

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Curtain going up

New Jack Wilcox Theatre at PARC now booking events

The cutting-edge technology and beauty of the new Jack Wilcox Theatre in downtown Plymouth is matched only by the respect paid to the history of the auditorium.

Located inside the Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex (PARC), the new 320-seat theater is named for Plymouth icon Jack Wilcox who graduated from the building when it was Plymouth High School. Mr. Wilcox, who established a charitable trust to benefit his community before his death in 2000, also performed on the school stage as a charter member of

the Plymouth Players. His charitable trust, which became the The Wilcox Foundation following his death, donated \$1.2 million toward funding the renovations and construction of the new, state-of-the-art auditorium.

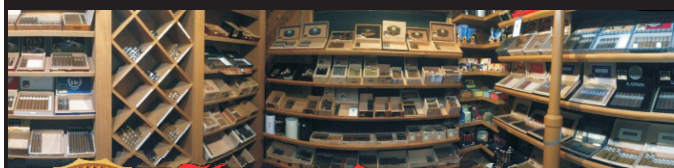
The transformation at the combination school auditorium and cafeteria has taken months, explained Gail Grieger, executive director of the PARC. She explained that the repurposing and restoration of the 1960s-era space was extensive, "but the end was worth the wait." She said the project faced challenges including labor short-

ages, supply chain issues and the general uncertainties caused by the global pandemic, which even delayed the planned grand opening ceremonies set for late January.

She said the former school lunchroom is now a "gem in the heart of the Plymouth community."

"We thought this was perfect, that it would give the Wilcox family some legacy, a permanent facility in the city," said Scott Dodge, a longtime Wilcox family friend and president of the Wilcox Foundation.

The plans originated, Grieger said,

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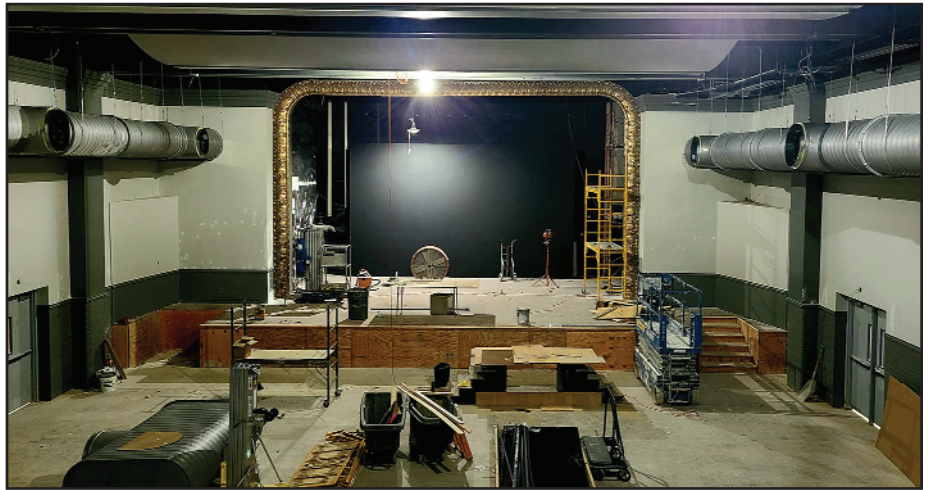
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with the members of the PARC Board of Directors and President Don Soenen who were determined to provide a functional and versatile venue for community performance arts groups such as the Michigan Philharmonic, Forever After Productions and Artistry Dance Center, all now tenants at PARC.

"This is a very special moment as we finish the total renovation of the theater at PARC," Soenen said. "Melding the original architecture and character of the venue with present day state-of-the-art technology, this theater will be a game changer for artistic performances and other events in the greater Plymouth community."

Melding that original architecture and enhancing the historic features of



the 1917-built space provided some challenges, Grieger explained. The school district had approved the installation of dropped ceilings and

soffits sometime around 1960, completely covering the original fixtures.

See **PARC**, page 12

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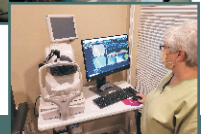
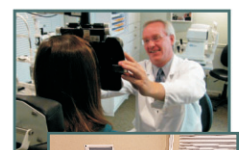
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PARC from page 11

Old photographs from various Plymouth High School yearbooks revealed there was a decorative proscenium arch above the stage, and sections of the plaster moldings could be seen from certain interior access points on the second floor; but no one was entirely certain how much of the historic detail remained intact behind the layers of drywall and ceiling tiles.

As demolition began, workers discovered the original proscenium arch, moldings and column in place, although repair of missing plaster details required meticulous care. Those details were enhanced with a coat of gold paint, a feature audience members are sure to notice, Grieger

said.

The new space is designed, she said, for flexible use and technology has provided some key elements in the new space. Retractable auditorium-style seating was selected to accommodate events that may require tables and chairs, such as dinner theater shows, class reunions, banquets and similar events. New rooms overlooking the theater were added on the second floor to house the advanced sound and light technology, including a camera system with the ability to both record and live-stream performances.

Grieger said several performances have been scheduled for 2022 in the theater including shows by Forever After Productions, one of the first tenants to rent space at PARC.

“We couldn’t be more excited to work in the newly-renovated theater space, said Debby Ash, executive director of the performing arts group. “We were the first to perform in the space back in August of 2015, just weeks after PARC had opened. We look forward to many more years of providing quality entertainment with state-of-the-art facilities equipment. The newly-renovated theater will become a point of pride for this community and beyond.”

A grand opening of the Jack Wilcox Theater will be scheduled within the next weeks, Grieger said, when the health threat of the pandemic has abated. For more information, call (734) 927-4090 or email info@plymouthparc.com.



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Furry friends Petting farm animals return to festival

For more than 25 years, Carousel Acres has specialized in bringing a little bit of nature into the big city.

Owner Tammy Iacobelli said the family-owned and operated business would return to Penniman Avenue in downtown Plymouth again this year bringing lots of furry, four-footed friends to visit with youngsters during the Ice Festival.

Iacobelli said that, as always, the weather will dictate which animals she brings.



"These are all animals we have raised here on the farm, so we understand their temperaments and nature. We won't take a chance with them getting sick or chilled," she explained.

She said the petting farm is always enjoyable for the staff members, too, because it is so popular and "children love it."

While there are several possible



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animals Iacobelli could send to visit Plymouth, she is tentatively planning on bringing a miniature horse, a donkey, some goats, a sheep or two, an alpaca and perhaps some ducks and bunnies. "It really depends on the weather and the temperature. The bunnies are not usually ever outside, so I just don't know how they might do if it is really cold," she said.

Iacobelli and her family, including her four daughters and 10 grandchildren are all involved with the farm, "not my daughters so much now that they are grown," she said, "but my grandchildren enjoy it." She worked in special education for 28 years before operating Carousel Acres full time.

Iacobelli said all the animals at the



farm are well-accustomed to travel and to being handled and petted.

"As I said, these are animals we have raised here at the farm. They are



well accustomed to being around people and being handled," she said.

Exact hours for the petting farm were not available at press time.



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It's 'Party Time'

Tent features live entertainment, benefits Vietnam veterans

One of the most popular attractions at the Ice Festival each year will return during the weekend and will once again be a benefit for the Vietnam veterans organization.

The annual party tent this year will take place in a 4,000 square-foot, structured tent in the parking lot behind E.G. Nick's on Forest Street. The tent, which is more like a building, has doors and retains heat, explained E.G. Nick's co-owner Frank Agostini.

The party will start at 8 p.m. Friday when Moxie Blitz will entertain the

crowds and on Saturday, Power Play Detroit will take to the stage. The \$5 cover charge will be a donation to the local Vietnam veterans group and Agostini stressed that the donations stay in the community and help the local group.

"We have people who drop \$20 and \$50 in because this is such a good cause," Agostini said, "and every dime of the money goes to the local veterans. It is used to help the local group. When people donate money at the tent, it goes directly back into the community. I think people donate

because it is such a good cause." The cover charge at the Ice Festival and Plymouth Fall Festival are the largest annual fundraisers for the veterans group, Agostini said.

Moxie Blitz, which will provide the entertainment Friday night, is a Detroit music group founded by Noreen Novrocki with a growing following, Agostini said, and on Saturday, Power Play Detroit will perform.

"They have a huge following and we expect a large crowd, as usual," he said.



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Hot spots

While thousands of visitors are expected to flock into Plymouth during the 40th Annual Ice Festival, there are several local restaurants that welcome visitors from throughout the area all year.

Plymouth has earned a reputation as one of the best places to go for dinner, lunch or an evening of entertainment. Everything from American classics to Freaky Fresh sandwiches or a nighttime trip to the roaring 20s, Plymouth offers the very best of the best.

Here are a few of our favorites.

E.G. Nick's
500 Forest Ave.
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While it remains the "hottest" place to be during the Ice Festival, E.G. Nick's is also one of the most popular places for lunch and dinner all year long.

The restaurant remains an area favorite and offers a wide variety of American recipes along with an eclectic selection of favorites on the menu. In addition to the great food and unique specialty cocktails, E.G. Nick's has a huge and varied wine selection along with a large selection of craft beers. The real attraction at E.G. Nick's is, of course, the menu which includes proven favorites which bring regulars back again and again along with the popular "specials"



that often are offered on the lunch and dinner menu.

Owners Tony Belli and Frank Agostini pride themselves on the high quality of the food and drink offered at the restaurant and have also taken extra steps to ensure the safety and comfort of patrons. E.G. Nick's features a unique air purifi-



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theebenezerplymouth.com

Monday.....CLOSED
Tuesday.....4PM - 12AM
Wednesday.....4PM - 12AM
Thursday.....4PM - 12AM
Friday.....4PM - 2AM
Saturday.....4PM - 2AM
Sunday.....CLOSED

(734) 404-5552



Escape the Ordinary

Karl's
CABIN

— RESTAURANT & BAR —



6005 GOTTFREDSON RD.
PLYMOUTH
734-455-8450

karlscabin.com

cation system which uses LED cutting-edge technology to provide hospital grade air purification throughout the entire building. The air filtration system, Agostini explained, was installed to provide an extra level of safety for diners during the COVID health restrictions. The system reduces all airborne and surface microbials, bacteria, viruses and mold from the air and offers one of the safest and purest air circulation systems possible, he said. "It's a unique and really effective system," he said, "and people comment and notice the difference in the air quality here."

The restaurant is famous for the award-winning spare ribs and planked whitefish, along with custom made individual pizzas and a long-list of favorite menu items. E.G. Nick's has also recently begun to offer some unique dessert cre-

ations including a variety of cheesecakes and some cookie-combination souffles.

The Ebenezer
305 Fleet St.
Plymouth
(734) 404-5552

The Ebenezer is the first and only speakeasy in Plymouth and one of the few in the Metro Detroit area. Hidden in plain view off Fleet Street and nestled in the basement of the former First National Bank of Plymouth (now occupied by Greek Islands Eatery), the name reflects Ebenezer J. Penniman, the first president of the bank in 1871. While the tellers, loan officers, and deposit slips are long gone, the former vault still exists as the private tasting room, equipped with lockers for members and an ambiance reminiscent of the roaring



1920s when flappers danced the Charleston and bootleggers provided the liquor.

The Ebenezer features cocktails, wine, craft beer and a small menu of shareable plates including charcuterie, shrimp cocktail and parmesan truffle fries.

See **Restaurants**, page 22



**YOUR NEXT
SANDWICH**
Could be
FREE

★ SIGN UP FOR ★
FREAKY FAST REWARDS 
AT JIMMYJOHNS.COM

Restaurants from page 21

It may be difficult to find, but well worth the effort. The Ebenezer is open from 4 p.m. until midnight Tuesday through Thursday and 4 p.m. until 2 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

Karl's Cabin 6005 Gottfredson Road Plymouth (734) 455-8450

Built in the 1940s, Karl's Cabin is truly a Michigan Made log cabin roadhouse restaurant, bar and grill. Located just minutes west of downtown Plymouth and just east of Ann Arbor, the restaurant is a very popular favorite of patrons from throughout the area.

Guest can enjoy rustic charm, friendly service and a large menu including hand-cut grilled steaks, fresh seafood, fresh pasta, big salads, burgers, artisan sandwiches and daily chef-created features. Slow roasted prime rib is usually on the menu for Friday and Saturday dinner.

The chef shops locally whenever possible and often brings organic and natural foods for a substantial gluten free menu, along with vegetarian options. Karl's offers 20 Michigan craft beers on draft, including Bell's Founders and Short's. The extensive wine list includes 60 wines to choose and more than 20 available by the glass.

Reservations are recommended.

Jimmy John's 770 Penniman Ave. Plymouth (734)737-0770

Jimmy John's make Freaky Fast sandwiches using only the freshest ingredients.

Staff members bake fresh bread for the unique sandwich combinations all day, so the bread is always served less than four hours out of the oven. Jimmy John's uses all-natural meats, which are freshly sliced to perfection daily for the maximum flavor.

Vegetables for sandwiches are always locally purchased and delivered fresh every morning and hand sliced daily at the restaurant.

The staff members spend 6 hours prepping every day to a sandwich in just 30 seconds. Order online at JimmyJohns.com.



and see the difference.

Leo's Coney Island 41496 Ann Arbor Road Plymouth (734) 416-8200

The family recipe for the famous Greek salad dressing along with the chili and other great homemade items has been the backbone of success for Leo's Coney Island. The Stassinopoulos brothers, Leo and Pete, have built a reputation for quality food and service.

Leo's Coney Island has evolved from a limited menu offering the basics of Coney Island, fries, burgers and Greek salads to a wide menu. Selections include a full line of items or the entire family including Greek specialties, breakfast and children's menu.

Leo's is open from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. Sunday through Tuesday and 24 hours Wednesday through Saturday.



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Good Times
Good Friends**

Plymouth

41496 Ann Arbor Rd. • (734) 416-8200



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**41001 Plymouth Rd
Plymouth, MI 48170**



Showroom Hours:

Mon/Thurs: **8:30AM - 8:00PM** Tue/Wed/Fri: **8:30AM - 6:00PM** Sat/Sun: **Closed**